152

A

# SERMON

Occasioned by the DEATH of the

Rev^d. Mr. *Daniel Whitewood*,

Of PORTSMOUTH-COMMON,

Who departed this Life the 26th of *August* 1765.

49

BRITISH MUSEUM

*A Strong Tower*; or, *The Saint's Refuge.*

# A SERMON

Occaſioned by the DEATH of the

## Rev. Mr. DANIEL WHITEWOOD,

Of PORTSMOUTH-COMMON,

Who departed this Life the 26th of *Auguſt* 1765.

Preached on the *Common*, *Portſmouth*,

By SAMUEL MEADOWS,

And Publiſhed at Requeſt.

*LONDON:*

Printed for the AUTHOR,

And Sold by G. KEITH, in *Gracechurch-Street*; E. and C. DILLY, in the *Poultry*; J. JOHNSON and B. DAVENPORT, in *Pater-noſter-Row*; W. LEAPORD, in *Tooley-Street*; J. ROBINSON, in *Shad-Thames*; and B. TOMPKINS, in *Fenchurch-Street*.

M.DCC.LXV.

[Price SIXPENCE.]

W. Musgrave.

BRITISH MUSEUM

PROV. xviii. 10.

*The Name of the* LORD *is a ſtrong Tower; the Righteous runneth into it, and is ſafe.*

THE great Deſign of Funeral Diſcourſes is the Benefit of the Living, and not of the Dead; for the Living know that they muſt die, the Dead know nothing; therefore, upon ſuch Occaſions, it is common to pitch on a Subject that may, under Divine Aſſiſtance, tend either to allure the Saint, or alarm the Sinner, unleſs ſome Portion of Scripture is aſſigned by the Deceaſed, while Living, or the ſurviving Relations; and that ſuch Portions are generally what have been found of ſervice to the Deceaſed when in this World; and ſuch was the Paſſage before us to our deceaſed Friend. He found *The Name*

*of the Lord to be a ſtrong Tower, into which the Righteous runneth, and is ſafe.* Safety! what is more noble, what is more intereſting to diſcourſe of? The irrational Creation, if purſued, how do they fly for Safety to avoid impending Ruin? And how much more ſhould the human Species betake themſelves to an Hiding-place when in Danger? A Mariner in a Storm will endeavour to fly for Refuge to a Harbour; the Field-marſhal, or General, will ſecure himſelf a Retreat, that he may have a Refuge to fly to from the powerful Enemy; and all this is juſtifiable, all this is reaſonable, all this is commendable; and if ſo in regard to the Body, how much more ſo in regard to the precious, immortal, and never-dying Soul? But, alas! we may ſay truly, that few there are (comparatively ſpeaking) that are concerned for this great and important Part. The World, in general, we find, inſtead of *following after the Things that make for Peace*, are following after thoſe Things which naturally lead to everlaſting Deſtruction; and how many, who ſeem to be ſeeking after a Refuge for Safety for their precious Souls, are truſting in a falſe Refuge. They are endeavouring to

make themſelves a Refuge of their own Fig-leaf Performances, which, alas! will never ſtand them in ſtead at the great Day, when Inquiſition ſhall be made for blood. Then, methinks, the great Enquiry ſhould be, where ſhall we fly that we may eſcape impending Ruin? I anſwer, *The Name of the* LORD *is a ſtrong Tower, the Righteous runneth into it, and is ſafe.* This is a Refuge that infinite Wiſdom has appointed, and it is pointed out in the ſacred Oracles, that we muſt run into it for Safety. In diſcourſing upon this Subject, I ſhall conſider the following Things:

I. The Refuge ſpoken of in our Text.—*The Name of the* LORD *is a ſtrong Tower.*

II. Who they are that run there for Safety; and they are ſaid to be the Righteous.—*The Righteous runneth into it.*

III. The Happineſs of ſuch Souls.——They *are ſafe.*

While I am treating on this Subject, may the Bleſſed, Eternal GOD, who formed this Refuge, enable every poor Soul, here pre-

ſent, to fly for Refuge to the Hope ſet before it. For *the Name of the* LORD *is a ſtrong Tower, the Righteous*, &c. I ſhall firſt take notice of the Refuge ſpoken of in the Text—*The Name of the* LORD *is a ſtrong Tower*. And here I ſhall conſider, 1ſt, What we are to underſtand by the Name of the LORD. 2dly, Shew in what Senſe the Name of the LORD may be compared to a Tower. 3dly, Examine into the Strength of this Tower.—For it is ſaid, *The Name of the* LORD *is a ſtrong Tower*.

*Firſt*, What are we to underſtand by the Name of the LORD? By the Name of the LORD here, I do not underſtand any particular Name, ſimply ſo conſidered, ſuch as the Name of the Father, the Name of the Son, or the Name of the Holy Ghoſt; for we may obſerve, that neither of theſe can ſtrictly be called the Saint's Refuge. The Name of the Father cannot, for GOD, out of CHRIST, is a conſuming Fire, *Heb.* xii. 29. *For our* GOD *is a conſuming fire*. Neither can the Name of the Son be intended; becauſe *Jehovah*, the Father, never took one Step out of CHRIST in the Way of the Sinner's Salvation, 2 *Cor.* v. 19. To wit, *that* GOD

*was*

*was in* CHRIST, *reconciling the World unto himſelf, not imputing their Treſpaſſes unto them.* Neither do I underſtand by it the Name of the Holy Ghoſt, for though he is the Sanctifier of the Sinner, yet our Sanctification is not our Juſtification in the Sight of God; but *we are juſtified freely by his Grace, through the Redemption that is in* JESUS CHRIST, *Rom.* iii. 24. But by *The Name of the* LORD, I underſtand the Divine Attributes and Perfections of *Jehovah*; theſe are engaged on the Behalf of his People as a ſtrong Tower; his Wiſdom, Love, Goodneſs, Mercy, Power, Righteouſneſs, *&c.* to which the Righteous run for Safety; and oftentimes, in the ſacred Oracles, we find the Attributes and Perfections of *Jehovah* are repreſented under this Phraſe: Thus the LORD proclaims himſelf, or the Name of the LORD, *The* LORD, *the* LORD GOD, *merciful and gracious, long-ſuffering, and abundant in Goodneſs and in Truth*, Exod. xxxiii. 19.—xxxiv. 6. compared. So likewiſe it is ſaid, *This is the Name whereby he ſhall be called, the* LORD *our Righteouſneſs*, as recorded *Jer.* xxiii. 6. and many other like Paſſages. We might take notice of the Perfections and Attributes of *Jehovah*, which are ſometimes made uſe of, as I ſaid, to ſet forth what he is to

his

his People, which maketh a ſtrong Tower into which the Righteous runneth and is ſafe. His Wiſdom, which is one of the Perfections of *Jehovah*, works for the Salvation of his People, when the glorious Plan was drawn in the everlaſting Covenant, at which Time Grace was treaſured up for them in CHRIST JESUS before the World began. And not only ſo, but alſo the Perfections of his Love, for GOD *ſo loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting Life*, John iii. 16. So we find that his infinite Condeſcention in the Aſſumption of Human Nature, and his Faithfulneſs to the everlaſting Covenant-Engagement, all theſe are engaged for, and on the Behalf of, his People. And, likewiſe, I would not miſs taking notice of that grand and matchleſs Love of the ever-bleſſed and glorious Spirit, who not only ſtopped us in our mad Career, when we were going on to Deſtruction, but pointed out CHRIST as a Refuge, and gave us Strength to run thither for Safety. So, in ſhort, it is all free and ſovereign Grace that there is ſuch a ſtrong Tower.

*Secondly*,

*Secondly*, I come now to ſhew how the Name of the LORD may be compared to a Tower. And,

*Firſt*, It may be compared to a Tower for its Heighth. Moſt Towers you know are built high. The firſt Tower that we read of, namely, the Tower of *Babel*, they thought to build it high indeed, *whoſe Top might reach unto Heaven*, Gen. xi. 4. But theſe poor Creatures were confounded in their Deſign; their Scheme proved abortive, as does the Schemes of all *Babel*-builders, who ſtrive to reach Heaven by their Performances; but they are dreadfully miſtaken. The Name of the LORD is a high Tower, it reaches to Heaven itſelf, which ſhews it is worthy of our Notice, and of the Soul's recourſe unto it for Safety.

*Secondly*, The Name of the LORD may be compared to a Tower, becauſe it is a Place of Defence. The LORD he is a Defence to his People; he is often ſpoken of under military Terms, as in 2 *Sam.* xxii. 2, 3. one of which is that of a high Tower. *David* ſaith, *The* LORD *is my Rock, and my Fortreſs, and my Deliverer, the God of my Rock, in him will I truſt, he is my Shield, and the Horn of my Sal-*

*Salvation, my high Tower, and my Refuge, my Saviour, that ſaveth me from Violence.* Thus the LORD, as he is a Defence unto his People, may be compared unto a Tower.

*Thirdly*, He will not only act defenſively, but offenſively for his People. There is no greater Offence to the LORD, than what the Devil is; and there is no greater Offence to the Devil, than what the LORD is; and he acts offenſively for his People. When Satan ſaw the Bleſſed JESUS in the Days of his Humiliation, how offended was he; ſays he, *What haſt thou to do with me*, JESUS; *art thou come to torment me before my Time?* And the LORD always will be ſo to him, becauſe there is ſuch an implacable and irreconcileable Enmity in his Heart.

*Fourthly*, The LORD may be compared to a Tower, becauſe he has an Armoury for his People. Thus we find Armouries were in Towers, *Cant.* iv. 4. *Thy Neck is like the Towers of* David, *builded for an Armoury, whereon there hang a thouſand Bucklers, all Shields of mighty Men.* There are Treaſures of all Sorts depoſited in CHRIST, even ſuch as we read of *Epheſ.* vi. 14, 15, 16, 17. *Put on*

*the*

*the whole Armour of* GOD. Your Loins are to be girt about with Truth; there is the Breaſt-plate of Righteouſneſs, the Shield of Faith, the Helmet of Salvation, and the Sword of the Spirit. This being the Caſe, you ſee very clearly, that the Name of the LORD may be compared to a Tower under theſe four Conſiderations. 1ſt, It may be compared to a Tower for its Heighth. 2dly, Becauſe it it is a Place of Defence. 3dly, In that he will not act only defenſively, but offenſively for his People. And, 4thly, Becauſe he has an Armoury for his People.

*Thirdly*, Take notice of the Strength of this Tower. *The Name of the* LORD *is a ſtrong Tower.* Here I muſt ſay of this Tower, as the *Pſalmiſt* did of *Zion*, *Pſal.* xlviii. 12, 13. *Walk about* Zion, *and go round about her, tell the Towers thereof, mark ye well her Bulwarks, conſider her Palaces, that ye may tell it to the Generation following.* In like manner, walk about this divine Tower of *Jehovah*, ſearch his divine Perfections, and ſee what an invincible and formidable Tower thy GOD is; ſo that Hell ſhall not prevail againſt the Tower that is engaged on the Behalf of your precious and immortal Souls. I think one Por-

tion of Scripture illuſtrates the Strength of this Tower, and that is *Iſa.* xxxiii. 16. there it is ſaid concerning the Perſon that flees for Refuge unto the Name of the LORD, *His Place of Defence ſhall be the Munition of Rocks; Bread ſhall be given him, his Waters ſhall be ſure.* You know a Munition of Rocks is fortified by Nature and Art, which ſeems to be impregnable; and this is the Caſe of our Fortreſs, our Tower, our Munition of Rocks; it is fortified by the Divine-nature in Union with the Human-nature; it was alſo fortified by Art when the Plan was laid that he ſhould engage for us. This ſhews, that our Tower is fortified by Nature and Art, and conſequently ſtrong; here *Bread ſhall be given us, and our Waters are ſure.* The Bread of Life which came down from Heaven is depoſited in this Tower. You cannot be ſtarved out here, as the *Jews* were firſt by *Nebuchadnezzar* King of *Babylon*, as appears from *Lam.* iv. 10. there it is ſaid, *The Hands of the pitiful Women have ſodden their own Children; they were their Meat in the Deſtruction of the Daughters of my People.* And afterwards by *Veſpatian*, as recorded by *Joſephus.* Neither can the Communications of theſe Waters be cut off. When *Cyrus*,

King

King of *Perſia*, laid Siege to *Babylon*, he cut off the Waters of the River *Euphrates*, as we are informed, and ſo fulfilled that Promiſe, *Iſa.* xliv. 27, 28. *That ſaith to the Deep, be dry, and I will dry up thy Rivers.* That ſaith of *Cyrus, He is my Shepherd, and ſhall perform all my Pleaſure; even ſaying to* Jeruſalem, *thou ſhalt be built, and to the Temple, thy Foundations ſhall be laid.* But nothing can ever cut off theſe Waters; *Neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, Things preſent, nor Things to come, nor Heighth, nor Depth, nor any other Creature ſhall be able to ſeparate us from the Love of* GOD, *which is in* CHRIST JESUS *our* LORD. Theſe Rivers of Water flow from the Heart of *Jehovah*, from the Fountain the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and come down through Golden Pipes and Channels. The Word and Ordinances are theſe Rivers, the Streams whereof make glad the City of our GOD, and none can cut off the Communications thereof. So, *The Name of the* LORD *is a ſtrong Tower.* This may ſuffice for our firſt general Head. We now come,

II. To ſhew who they are that run for Refuge to this Tower.—*The Name of the* LORD *is a ſtrong Tower; the Righteous runneth into it, and is ſafe.*

*Firſt*, I ſhall ſhew, who the Righteous are. *Secondly*, That the Righteous Perſon is a vigilant Perſon; *He runs*. *Thirdly*, That he runs in earneſt, for he runneth into it, he will not go without his Errand. You may obſerve the Words in our Text, are ſpoken in the Singular; not the Righteous run and are ſafe, but the Righteous runneth, and is ſafe; though we are not to ſuppoſe any individual Perſon is meant, but all GOD's Elect. *The Righteous runneth into it, and is ſafe.*

*Firſt*, We are to deſcribe the Righteous Perſon. The Righteous Man may be conſidered, 1ſt, As he ſtands Righteous in the Sight of GOD; and they are ſuch unto whom the Father, by an Act of Grace, imputes the Righteouſneſs of his Son JESUS CHRIST; this is their juſtifying Righteouſneſs in which they ſtand before the LORD. I know a great many militate againſt this doctrine, but the Apoſtle *Paul* inſiſts on it, and cites

cites a Paſſage out of the *Pſalms* to ſtrengthen it; he ſays, *Even as* David *deſcribes the Bleſſedneſs of the Man to whom* God *imputeth Righteouſneſs without Works*; ſaying, *Bleſſed are they whoſe Iniquities are forgiven, and whoſe Sins are covered; bleſſed is the Man to whom the* Lord *will not impute Sin*, Rom. iv. 6, 7, 8. compared with *Pſalm* xxxii. 1, 2. The Soul has imputed to it the Righteouſneſs of Christ, which is every way anſwerable to the Demands of the Law of God. The Apoſtle ſays, *He was made Sin for us who knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteouſneſs of* God *in him*, 2 Cor. v. 21. The *Pſalmiſt*, exulting in this Righteouſneſs, ſays, *Bleſſed is the People that know the joyful Sound, they ſhall walk, O* Lord, *in the Light of thy Countenance, in thy Name ſhall they rejoice all the Day, and in thy Righteouſneſs ſhall they be exalted*, Pſalm lxxxix. 15, 16. And the Prophet *Iſaiah* xlv. 24, 25. ſaith, *Surely ſhall one ſay, in the* Lord *have I Righteouſneſs and Strength, even to him ſhall Men come, and all that are incenſed againſt him ſhall be aſhamed; in the* Lord *ſhall all the Seed of* Iſrael *be juſtified, and ſhall glory*. Therefore it may be ſaid, concerning the Lord, that he is *The* Lord *our Righteouſneſs*. But,

*Secondly*,

*Secondly*, There is alſo another Righteouſneſs, which we are to diſtinguiſh the Righteous Man by, and that is a Righteouſneſs which is imparted. There is not only an imputed Righteouſneſs, which is an Act of the Father; but alſo an imparted Righteouſneſs, which is the Grace of GOD conveyed to the Heart of a poor Sinner; and as Satan works upon our corrupt Nature, and raiſes it up to all manner of Iniquity; ſo the new Nature, being implanted in the Soul, the LORD, the Spirit, works upon the Soul, and raiſes it up to Faith, Love, and every other Grace, according as he is pleaſed to give to every Man the Meaſure of Faith, *&c.* ſome more, ſome leſs. So ſuch Perſons, when they come to have Faith wrought in them, in Proportion to that Faith, they are enabled to ſee their Intereſt in CHRIST, are juſtified thereby, and *rejoice in Hope of the Glory of* GOD, *Rom.* v. 2.

*Thirdly*, The Righteous Man has not only a juſtifying and ſanctifying Righteouſneſs, but alſo he hath a moral Righteouſneſs. A Man may have a moral Righteouſneſs that hath nothing farther; *For the Grace of* GOD *that bringeth Salvation, hath appeared unto all Men, teaching us that denying Ungodlineſs and worldly*

*ly Luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent World,* Titus ii. 11, 12. So then I humbly conceive, that a Righteous Man is one that has juſtifying Righteouſneſs in the Sight of God, ſanctifying Righteouſneſs in his own Soul, and moral Righteouſneſs in the Sight of the World.

*Secondly*, Such a Perſon is vigilant, *The Righteous runneth*; he is not ſlothful. We are not to ſettle on our Lees, becauſe we have a juſtifying Righteouſneſs in the Sight of God. No, a Soul that is enabled to fly for Refuge, he is vigilant, he runneth, and indeed there is great need of it. The Apoſtle *Paul*, who made as great a Proficiency in the Divine Life as any of his Cotemporaries, gives us to underſtand, that he had not already attained ſo much as might be attained, nor was already perfect, but forgetting the Things that were behind, he preſſed forward. So we ſhould preſs forward. We have many formidable Enemies; it becomes us at all Times to guard againſt them, and to run from them. The Apoſtle exhorts to this noble Duty of Vigilance in 1 *Peter* v. 8. *Be ſober, be vigilant, becauſe your Adverſary, the Devil, as a roaring Lyon, walketh about, ſeeking*

*ing whom he may devour*. Let me tell you, my beloved, the Devil, that roaring Lyon, can walk as faſt as you can run. Poor *Peter* experienced it; he was a very great Runner in his LORD's Commands, and when his Maſter was about to be tried, he followed him afar off, and the Devil overtook and tempted him to ſware he did not know his dear Maſter JESUS CHRIST. So, I ſay, there is need of Vigilance. The Saints of old knew this, ſome of them by woeful Experience, when they were deficient in the ſame. So the Perſons in our Text are ſpoken of as ſuch that are vigilant, *The Righteous runneth into it, and is ſafe*. They are determined they will take the Kingdom of Heaven by Violence; for we are told, that *the Kingdom of Heaven ſuffereth Violence, and the Violent take it by Force*, Matt. xi. 12.

*Thirdly, He runneth into it*. This running into it I humbly think is to be underſtood of Faith. We are told, *that they that believe do enter into Reſt*; and when a Soul is preſſing forward towards this ſtrong Tower, he then, in Proportion to his Faith, enters into it. You that are Believers in CHRIST, can find more Reſt now than when you was afar

afar off: How ſhould you be continually ſtriving, and never draw back unto Perdition, but preſs onward to the ſaving of your Souls. I muſt haſten,

*Thirdly*, To ſhew the Happineſs of thoſe that fly for Refuge to the Name of the LORD. It is ſaid concerning them, that *they are ſafe*. I ſhall conſider, 1ſt, What they are ſafe from. 2dly, The Certainty of their Safety. 3dly, When they ſtand more immediately in need of that Safety.

*Firſt*, What they are ſafe from. And 1ſt, They are ſafe from the fiery Darts of the Devil. 2dly, They are ſafe from the vindictive Wrath of GOD. And 3dly, From eternal Deſtruction.

*Firſt*, They are ſafe from the fiery Darts of the Devil. I do not ſay they are free from them totally, for the Devil will caſt his fiery Darts after them the more they go to CHRIST; but the nearer the Soul gets to CHRIST, the farther he is from the Devil's fiery Darts. When the Soul is at a Diſtance from the LORD JESUS CHRIST, then Satan's fiery Darts are more ſenſibly felt; he may

feel them as it were ſticking in his very Skin; but as he enters into this Reſt, his Faith, as a brazen Shield, blunts the fiery Darts, ſo that he can laugh at Satan's Rage, and triumph in his ſtrong Tower.

*Secondly*, They are ſafe from the vindictive Wrath of GOD. For as Juſtice is taken at the Hand of their Surety, *There is therefore now no Condemnation to them that are in* CHRIST JESUS.

*Thirdly*, They are ſafe from eternal Deſtruction; for as one well obſerves,

*Eternity ſhall ne'er let fly*
*An Arrow in the Face of them that unto* JESUS *fly.*

They ſhall be ſaved by Grace, which is corroborated by *Iſa.* xlv. 17. there it is ſaid, *Iſrael ſhall be ſaved in the* LORD *with an everlaſting Salvation*; conſequently, they ſhall never fall into Condemnation.

*Secondly*, The Certainty of the Safety of thoſe that have fled to this Refuge. The Apoſtle ſhews the Safety of thoſe that are the Heirs of Promiſe; how that the LORD had made a Promiſe to *Abraham*, in order that they might have ſtrong Conſolation, *Heb.* vi. 17, 18. *Wherein* GOD *willing more abundantly*

*ly to ſhew unto the Heirs of Promiſe the Immutability of his Councils, confirmed it by an Oath, that by two immutable Things in which it was impoſſible for* GOD *to lye, we might have a ſtrong Conſolation who have fled for Refuge to lay hold on the Hope ſet before us.*

The Refuge here ſpoken of, ſeems to be an Alluſion to the Cities of Refuge which the LORD appointed for the Children of *Iſrael* in the Land of *Canaan*. The grand Deſign of which was the Preſervation of the Man-ſlayer, when inadvertently he had ſlain any Man; for after Juſtice had found that the Man was ſlain, the Avenger of Blood immediately purſued the Man-ſlayer. Now in order that he might eſcape the Sword of Juſtice, and fly to this Refuge ſet before him, all Impediments were removed out of the Way, and not only ſo, but we are informed, that there were Way-marks, or Way-poſts ſet up, on which was an Index, which had written on it *Refuge! Refuge!* in legible Characters, ſo that he that run might read. It is obſerved alſo, that the Doors of theſe Cities were open Night and Day, which plainly ſhews what a Refuge this was to the Man-

ſlayer; juſt thus it is in regard to the Refuge we have taken notice of.

All Mankind, by Nature, are Man-ſlayers; we have deſtroyed ourſelves, *Hoſea* xiii. 9. *Thou haſt deſtroyed thyſelf, but in me is thy Help.* The Juſtice of GOD, as the Avenger of Blood, purſues us as the Man-ſlayer; now in order that we might get ſafe to this City of Refuge, or the ſtrong Tower, of which it is an emblem, our great and glorious *Emanuel* has removed all Impediments out of the Way. He hath removed the Moral Law out of the Way, as to its Penalty, (though not as to its Precept) in that he hath fulfilled it. He hath alſo removed the Ceremonial Law out of the Way, in that he hath nailed it to the Croſs, *Col.* ii. 14. *Blotting out the Hand-writing of Ordinances that was againſt us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the Way, nailing it to his Croſs.* And that we may not be at a Loſs in flying to this Refuge, we have Way-marks, or Way-poſts, the Scriptures of Truth, on which, in legible Characters, are wrote, *Grace! Grace!* ſo that he that runneth may read it. And as the Doors of the City of Refuge were open Night and Day, ſo the Doors of Mercy are open

open continually, that any poor Soul that is flying from the Avenger of Blood may enter in, and there find Safety.

Their Safety farther appears from the many great and precious Promiſes which ſtand upon Record, holding forth the Safety of thoſe that fly to the LORD for Refuge, one of which we have recorded in *Iſa.* xxxii. 2. *And a Man ſhall be as an Hiding-place from the Wind, and a Covert from the Tempeſt, as Rivers of Water in a dry Place, as the Shadow of a great Rock in a weary Land.* By which I humbly conceive is meant our Bleſſed LORD JESUS CHRIST, which, as we have already proved, is one Part of this Tower, and anſwers this Character of Safety ſpoken of in the Text; add to this his own Declaration in *John* vi. 37. *All that the Father giveth me ſhall come to me, and him that cometh to me, I will in no-wiſe caſt out.* This methinks is a Word of Conſolation to the poor Soul who is ready to make the following Objection; alas, I find no Comfort in this Refuge under this Conſideration, that the Perſons who are ſaid to fly thither are Righteous, for I find myſelf to be a poor, wretched, miſerable Sinner.

To

To this I anſwer, No ſooner does a Soul take one Step to the LORD JESUS CHRIST, as the Way of Salvation in Sincerity, but that Soul has taken a Righteous Step, and conſequently anſwers the Character of a Righteous Perſon; for we are told by our LORD himſelf, *John* vi. 44. *No Man can come to me, except the Father which hath ſent me, draw him.* Now, if I am enabled to come to CHRIST, conſequently I am drawn of the Father; and, if drawn of the Father, it is in Conſequence of my being loved with an everlaſting Love, as recorded, *Jerem.* xxxi. 3. *I have loved thee with an everlaſting Love, therefore with Loving-kindneſs have I drawn thee.* Though ſuch Souls find much Sin in them, yet there is alſo an inherent Righteouſneſs implanted in their Souls, that is continually warring againſt it. In other Words, there is a two-fold Spring of Action in every regenerate Man, namely, Fleſh and Spirit, which maintains a continual Combat; *The Fleſh luſteth againſt the Spirit, and the Spirit againſt the Fleſh*; ſo that it is with the converted Soul ſometimes, through the Prevalence of Corruption, as it was with the *Gadites* of old, *Gen.* xlix. 19. *Gad, a Troop ſhall overcome*

*come him, but he ſhall overcome at the laſt.* Deut. xxxiii. 27. *The eternal* GOD *is thy Refuge, and underneath are the everlaſting Arms, and he ſhall thruſt out the Enemy from before thee, and ſhall ſay, deſtroy them.* For though Sin may tyrannize, yet Grace ſhall reign; *Sin ſhall not have Dominion you, for ye are not under the Law, but under Grace,* Rom. vi. 14.

Again, The Complaint of a Soul, under a Senſe of Sin, is a plain Demonſtration that Light is broke into that Soul, otherwiſe, Sin would remain imperceptible in the Soul. All Mankind, in a State of Nature, are not only Dark, but Darkneſs itſelf, even in the very Abſtract, *Epheſ.* v. 8. *For ye were ſometimes Darkneſs, but now are ye Light in the Lord.* Now ye know, that in a dark Room, however filthy it may be, it is hid, it is loſt in Obſcurity; ſo it is in the Heart of an unregenerate Perſon; whatever Filthineſs, whatever Corruption there may be, it is buried, it is loſt in that horrid Gulph of Darkneſs. It is a Maxim among the Wiſe, that the Moon never diſcovers its dark Spots, but when the Sun ſhines upon it. It is alſo a Maxim in

Divi-

Divinity, that the Soul never diſcovers its dark Spots, but by the Light of the glorious Sun of Righteouſneſs; for *whatever maketh manifeſt, is Light*; wherefore he ſaith, *Awake thou that ſleepeſt, ariſe from the Dead, and* CHRIST *ſhall give thee Light.*

Once more, The Deſire of the Soul after CHRIST, is CHRIST in the Deſire. This is not a Plant which grows in Nature's Garden; it is ſomething which is above Nature; now as nothing can riſe above its own Sphere, was a ſpiritual Deſire to be found in an unregenerate ſoul, it would be above the Sphere of Nature. But this we may take for a ſtanding Maxim which our Bleſſed LORD delivered to *Nicodemus*, John iii. 6. *That which is born of the Fleſh, is Fleſh* (and no more) *and that which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit.* So that upon the whole, we may ſafely conclude, that where a Diſcovery of Sin is made in the Soul, and Deſires are wrought in the Soul to come to the LORD JESUS CHRIST, that that Soul is born of GOD, that that Soul is enlightened of the LORD, that a good Work is begun in that Soul that ſhall be performed to the Day of JESUS CHRIST, *Prov.* iv. 11. But *The Path of the Juſt is like the*

*ſhining*

*ſhining Light, that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect Day*; therefore ſuch may take Encouragement, notwithſtanding they ſee themſelves to be Sinners, to *fly for Refuge, to lay hold on the Hope ſet before them.* So that we find this is a ſafe and ſure Refuge into which we may venture our immortal Souls. I am,

*Thirdly*, To conſider the Time when we ſtand in need of this Tower.

*Firſt*, We ſtand in need of this Tower, when under Trials and Difficulties, Diſtreſſes and Perplexities. At ſuch a Time we ſtand in need to ſee our Safety, when nothing in this World comforts us, but every Thing is ſeemingly making againſt us, as is the Caſe of many poor Souls. But the Apoſtle informs us, *Rom.* v. 3. that ſuch that have fled to the LORD, and are yet under Divine Shelter, that they rejoice in Tribulation, and let what will befal them, they have got a Portion above, that can never be loſt in Time, nor Eternity.

*Secondly*, They ſtand in need of this Safety when Satan is enraged, as he ſometimes is, very violently. What Temptations,

what Thoughts, do ſometimes paſs them, as calling in Queſtion their Intereſt in CHRIST, or the Truth of the Scriptures; yea, ſometimes, the very Being of GOD. At ſuch a Time when they draw near to this Tower, and the Enemy comes in like a Flood, the Spirit of the LORD lifts up a Standard againſt him; for the Lyon of the Tribe of *Judah* is held up by the LORD the Spirit, the great Standard-bearer of his People. This is elegantly deſcribed by the Prophet *Iſaiah* xi. 10. *And in that Day there ſhall be a Root of* Jeſſe, *which ſhall ſtand for an Enſign of the People; to it ſhall the* Gentiles *ſeek, and his Reſt ſhall be glorious.* The Soul looks to him, and is ſafe.

*Thirdly*, Another Trial I would take notice of, is, at the Time of Death, when we ſhall ſtand in need of this Tower; when the poor Soul is about to leave the earthly Houſe of this Tabernacle, when the Curtains of Night are drawn, when his Eye-ſtrings are broken, when he is about to bid adieu to all Things here below; how neceſſary and ſuitable will ſuch a Safety be at this Time?

Time? And this was the Happineſs our deceaſed Brother enjoyed in this trying Seaſon; *When his Fleſh and Heart failed him*, he found *The Lord was the Strength of his Heart, and his Portion for ever*; and he was enabled to fly to this ſtrong Tower. Thus I have paſſed through the Things propoſed, wherein I have 1ſt ſhewn, That the Name of the LORD is a ſtrong Tower. 2dly, Who they are that run thither; namely, the Righteous. And 3dly, Their Happineſs, they are ſafe. I would now make ſome Improvement, and ſo draw to a Concluſion.

*Firſt*, You ſee then, my dear Friends, that the Name of the LORD is a ſtrong Tower; the divine Perfections of *Jehovah* are engaged for, and on the Behalf of, his dear People; and theſe may be compared to a ſtrong Tower, and ſuch Souls as have recourſe thereunto, will undoubtedly be everlaſtingly ſafe. Now the grand and important Queſtion is, Am I one of theſe Righteous which are ſpoken of in our Text, who run thither for Safety, or elſe what Good will this Refuge do me? This ſhould be the grand Enquiry of every

Soul, Am I one of theſe Righteous? Now, perhaps, I cannot form a Judgment of the Deſigns of *Jehovah*, whither my Name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life. This we cannot ſcrutinize into, therefore in order to know whither I am elected or choſen in CHRIST before the Foundation of the World, the Enquiry ſhould be, Am I ſanctified? The Apoſtle ſays, *give Diligence to make your Calling and Election ſure*, 2 Peter i. 10. and we are to prove our Election by our Calling. There is a certain ſett of People that talk about Election, and deny effectual Vocation, or the Grace of GOD upon the Soul. How they make their Election ſure, I cannot tell, but I would adviſe you to take the Apoſtle's Rule. Let us enquire when the LORD firſt began with us, how the Work of Grace was carried on, and if we can prove our Calling, we may ſafely conclude our Election, and ſuch have Reaſon to bleſs the Name of the LORD, for *He that hath begun the good Work, will perform it to the Day of* JESUS CHRIST.

*Secondly*, Are there any poor Creatures here, that are forming a Refuge of their own Fig-

Fig-leaf Performances? Or, in other Words, are there any here that are about to eſtabliſh as a Refuge their own Righteouſneſs? If there be any ſuch here, you are really Objects of Pity. I would give a Word of Exhortation to ſuch a Soul as the Angel gave to *Lot, Eſcape for thy Life, look not behind thee, nor ſtay thou in all the Plain, eſcape to the Mountain, leaſt thou be conſumed*; that is to ſay, to this Tower, Gen. xix. 17. leaſt the Brimſtone of GOD's Wrath light upon you; for while you are in ſuch a ſecure State, the Devil troubles you not, knowing that e're long, unleſs you are found in this Tower, you'll fall a Victim to him.

*Thirdly*, Are there any here that have made Lies their Refuge, that have made a Covenant with Death, and are in League with Hell? *Iſa.* xxviii. 15. *Becauſe ye have ſaid we have made a Covenant with Death, and with Hell are we at Agreement, when the overflowing Scourge ſhall paſs through, it ſhall not come unto us, for we have made Lies our Refuge, and under Falſhood have we hid ourſelves.* Poor unhappy Wretch, the LORD ſaith to ſuch, *Judgment alſo will I lay to the Line, and Righteouſneſs*

*neſs to the Plummet, and the Hail ſhall ſweep away the Refuge of Lies, and the Waters ſhall overflow the Hiding-place*, as in Verſe the 17th. What will ſuch do when they come to lye on a ſick and dying Bed? Poor miſerable Wretches, when they look behind them, and ſee all their Sins; look forward, and ſee the Wrath of GOD; and when they look beneath them, and ſee the gaping Pit of everlaſting Torment, how dreadful muſt this appear to a poor wretched Sinner? Methinks the dreadful State of ſuch Souls upon a dying Bed, are very juſtly and awfully deſcribed by Mr. *Robert Blair*, in his Poem, entitled the *Grave*, and quoted by Mr. *Hervey* in his Meditations; his Words are theſe:

*In that dread Moment, how the frantic Soul*
*Raves round the Walls of her Clay Tenement!*
*Runs to each Avenue, and ſhrieks for Help,*
*But ſhrieks in vain: How wiſhfully ſhe looks*
*On all ſhe's leaving, now no longer hers.*
*A little longer, yet a little longer,*
*O! might ſhe ſtay to waſh away her Crimes,*
*And fit her for her Paſſage: Mournful*
*Sight!*
*Her very Eyes weep Blood, and every Groan*

*She*

*She heaves, is big with Horror: But the Foe,*
*Like a ſtaunch Murderer, ſteady to his Purpoſe,*
*Purſues her cloſe through every Lane of Life,*
*Nor miſſes once the Tract, but preſſes on;*
*Till forced at laſt to the tremendeous Verge,*
*At once ſhe ſinks* ———

Mournful Sight indeed, enough to make our own Eyes weep Blood, to think any poor Souls can come under ſuch a Deſcription. If there be any ſuch here, *Oh! that they were wiſe, that they would underſtand, and conſider their latter End,* and fly to this Name of the LORD, which *Is a ſtrong Tower, to which the Righteous runneth, and is ſafe.*

Having finiſhed my Deſign from the Text, it may be ſuppoſed I ſhould ſay ſomething of the Deceaſed. It is well known as to his general Character, that he was a Perſon that walked in all the Ordinances and Commandments of GOD blameleſly, human Frailties excepted, and that great Numbers well knew, and my ſaying any Thing would be needleſs; yet was I to be ſilent, would not the Stones cry out againſt me? I would therefore

fore obſerve, that he was amiable, as he ſtood in the Church of GOD, the Family, and the World; eminent for true Chriſtian Piety. In the Church which he belonged to, he bore the Character of a Member, Deacon, and Preacher of the Goſpel, upwards of 30 Years, in which he walked very circumſpectly agreeable to the Characters with which he was inveſted. I may alſo ſay, that the Doctrines he preached were ſuch as I have now delivered, free Juſtification by the imputed Righteouſneſs of CHRIST, Sanctification by the Spirit of GOD, and a Conduct to ſhew our Gratitude to the LORD in Obedience to him our great King. In the Family he was a loving Huſband, as his ſurviving Widow can teſtify; an indulgent Father, though he did not countenance his Children in Sin, but gave ſincere Precautions, yet he gave them all needful Indulgence, and ſuch as conſiſted with Chriſtian Prudence. As a Maſter, he was one that engaged his Servants to attend on the Worſhip of the LORD in his Houſe, and in the Family to reading GOD's Word, and in praying conſtantly with them, of which I am witneſs. As to his Behaviour in the World, I may ſay in brief, he was an honeſt

Neigh-

Neighbour, a faithful Friend, one that was ready to do a kind Office to any, and that without ſiniſter Ends; ſo that we may ſay, concerning him, as *David* did of *Abner*, that *A great Man is fallen in* Iſrael, 2 *Sam.* iii. 28. His Sickneſs was long and tedious; he was under great Pain, and during the whole Time, he behaved with the greateſt Reſignation and Serenity of Soul that ever I knew. He never expreſſed any Diſtruſt during his whole Sickneſs, but was often ſpeaking of his dear LORD JESUS CHRIST, and deſired to be delivered, and theſe Words of our Text were a great Support to him. On the 26th of laſt Month *(Auguſt)* he fell aſleep, I humbly hope in the Arms of JESUS; ſo that you, my dear Freinds, his ſurviving Relations, have no Cauſe *To ſorrow as them without Hope, knowing that they that ſleep in* JESUS, GOD *will bring with him.*

I would firſt addreſs myſelf to you the Widow of the Deceaſed. You have loſt a kind and loving Huſband; but remember, that the LORD JESUS CHRIST liveth; may he, your Maker, be your Huſband; and you will find him to be a ſuitable one, ſuch as is

able, yea willing, to ſupply all your Wants. To you, his dear Children, the Offspring of his Bowels, you have loſt a kind and indulgent Father, may GOD be your Guide and Support; have Recourſe to him, and you will find him to be *A Father to the Fatherleſs, as well as a Friend to the Widow.* My Beloved, the Members of this Church, hereby you are diminiſhed in your Number; you find Death is ſnatching away one and another; what is incumbent on us under ſuch melancholly Circumſtances, is to pray mightily unto GOD that he would raiſe up others to ſucceed thoſe that are called away by Death. As to the Auditory in general, that are not Members of this Church, we find the Arrows of Death are promiſcuouſly flying, and know not who may be the next Victim, ſince Death ſtops not at any, but as one well obſerves,

*Grim Death attacks the Hut, the Hall, the Tower,*
*The* LORD, *and Page, he levels in an Hour;*

*The*

*The Wiſe, the Fool, the Coward, and the Brave,*
*The Rich, the Poor, the Monarch, and the Slave,*
*Are in cold Chains led Priſoners to the Grave.*

It becomes us then to be Followers of them, who, through Faith and Patience, are now inheriting the Promiſes; and in order thereunto, may we all be enabled to fly for Refuge, to lay hold on the Hope ſet before us in our Text, *Even to the Name of the* LORD, *which is a ſtrong Tower; the Righteous runneth into it, and is ſafe.*

FINIS.

It becomes us then to be Followers of them,
who, through Faith and Patience, are now
Inheriting the Promises; and in order there-
unto, may we all be enabled to lay for Re-
fuge, to lay hold upon the Hope set before us
in our Text, Even the Anchor of the Soul,
sure and stedfast, and which

BRITISH MUSEUM